

Carbon. Taxes. And Futurethink.

I-732 is an initiative to make Washington's regressive tax system fairer while moving the country forward and helping our planet, too.

Does "carbon tax" sound alarming? It's actually the simple idea of using taxes to discourage behaviors we want to discourage. I-732 asks you to support a proven, **revenue-neutral** plan to achieve several important goals. It taxes pollution, not people, using a method of taxing carbon that's already a success in British Columbia and 20- some nations around the world.

Too often voters respond to the T word with growls or teeth gnashing - and with good reason. Washington has one of the nation's most regressive tax systems.

I-732 addresses tax fairness in several ways.

First, it will tax CO₂ polluting fuels \$25 per ton. "The way to get less pollution is to make polluting expensive," says Yorum Bauman, the economist leading the grassroots non-partisan group Carbon WA that's sponsoring I-732. By making polluting expensive, you motivate market forces to work on creative ways to spark innovation, spur the development of new, energy-smart technologies and encourage conservation.

Next, reduce our regressive sales taxes by 1% across the board and replace that lost revenue with carbon tax funds. Carbon tax revenues will also fund a \$1,500 tax credit for working families and a reduction in the B&O tax on manufacturing, keeping funds in Washington. Everyone benefits.

Bauman estimates that most households will pay a few hundred dollars a year more for fossil fuels and a few hundred dollars a year less for everything else, thanks to reduced sales tax. This revenue neutrality means individuals can decide on whatever changes in spending or saving would benefit their own particular circumstances.

The carbon tax doesn't have to be levied business by business at the local level; it can be levied upstream at a few dozen places — at the wellhead, the mine face, and the liquid natural gas depot. These are among the "vast advantages" of the carbon tax, according to Jeffrey Sachs, director of the Earth Institute at Columbia University.

Also, a carbon tax can keep lawmakers (and lobbyists) from enriching their favorites or attempting to divine winning technologies, as researcher James Hansen observed: "Instead, the winners would be innovators who invent products with improved energy efficiency or develop carbon-free energies, which allow people to reduce their carbon tax."

Why CO₂?

CO₂ pollutes the air we breathe and plays a major role in melting glaciers, making oceans more acid, warping our weather and disrupting crop production. Reducing CO₂ makes for healthier people and helps move Earth's climate back from the point of no return.

When might that be? Consider: October. November. December. January. February. March. April. May, June. Nine months in a row have shattered the previous month's temperature record around the world . . . and July may likely be the 10th.

What's happening made simple

Let's look at *carbon budgets* -- a basic measurement climate scientists use. They calculate that, to keep from raising the global temperature 1.5 °C, which will tip us into irreversible warming, we can put no more than 720 billion tons of carbon into the atmosphere. Since the mid-19th century, we've already added 610 billion tons to the atmosphere. That leaves a "budget" of only 110 billion tons.

Right now, we humans are emitting about 11 billion tons a year -- which means our remaining budget will be all used up in just 10 years, unless we change the way we do things.

Anything that takes CO₂ out of the atmosphere helps-- from planting more trees to composting food scraps. But now is the time for bigger, more decisive actions. And the younger generation is demanding we get serious.

Leading the way

Eight young Washington State citizens have already won a legal case requiring statewide climate change actions. By requesting that Ecology establish rules to limit CO₂ emissions in Washington according to what scientists say is needed to protect our oceans and climate system, they have set a national example.

"The effect of this decision is that for the first time in the United States, a court of law has ordered a state agency to consider the most current and best available climate science when deciding to regulate carbon dioxide emissions," said Andrea Rodgers of the Western Environmental Law Center, the attorney for the youth petitioners.

Washington voters can decide to adopt the country's first carbon tax, putting the state at the cutting edge of carbon-tax political action - which can have an impact that reaches across the whole country -- and beyond.

Your part? Learn more about I-732. Share what you've learned with your friends, neighbors and colleagues. And,

come November, cast your vote for I-732 - and our future.

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Deeper Dive:

There's a cheap, proven fix to the world's biggest problem

<http://www.cnn.com/2016/04/19/opinions/sutter-carbon-tax-washington-british-columbia/>

CASHING IN OUR CARBON

<http://www.sightline.org/series/cashing-in-our-carbon/>

Sign this [petition](#) back the 21 kids from across the U.S., ages 8-19, who have taken the U.S. government to federal court, demanding science-based action on climate change. Every person, regardless of age, race, gender or religion has the right to a clean environment and a safe future - and the U.S. government's continued acts that prevent meaningful climate recovery undermine that right.

Carbon Tax & 100% Dividend vs. Tax & Trade* James E. Hansen, Feb. 2009

*'Tax and Trade' is pseudonymously and sometimes disingenuously termed 'Cap & Trade'

http://www.columbia.edu/~jeh1/2009/WaysAndMeans_20090225.pdf

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Democracy1st · 5 months ago

Dr. Jim Hansen's succinct three-minute explanation shows why a carbon tax returning the funds to the people works better than cap and trade. See 39:35 minutes at my inside-cop21 documentary: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?...>